

REMARKS

Claims 1, 4-9 and 13-15 were acted upon in the aforesaid Office Action. No claim has been canceled herein and new claims 17-22 have been added, leaving claims 1, 4-9, 13-15 and 17-22 for consideration.

Claim 1 stands rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as anticipated by French Patent 2,803,534. A translation of the specification of the FR '534 patent is provided herewith.

The FR patent shows in Figs. 2-5 and describes a prior version of the type of fluid filtration assembly of the present application. The version shown and described in the FR patent suffered from some notable deficiencies, not from an operational standpoint, but rather from a production standpoint.

Referring to Fig. 3 of the FR patent, it will be seen that the assembly includes a series of "balconies" (7) fixed to a member (10) and a series of balconies (4) fixed to a frame (3). When brought together, the elements (4) and (7) enclosed cassette filters (13) (Fig. 4).

The shortcomings of the prior assembly, invented by the same inventor as the present assembly, were (1) the prior assembly had to be manufactured for a set number of filtration units. Once the assembly was made, there could not be a change in the number of filtration units on the assembly. A whole new assembly was required; (2) manufacture of the whole assembly was necessarily expensive, as was inventory of assemblies of different capacities; (3) the prior assembly was adapted for vertical disposition only, making the assembly unattractive and placing great weight on a roof-top, or the like, in one relatively small area; and (4) transportation was a problem and installation a

problem in view of the large size and weight of assemblies of numerous filtration units.

The present invention solves the above problems by providing small light-weight modular elements, all of which are connectable to others of the modular elements to provide a large heavy assembly but which are easily manufactured, inventoried, transported, lifted into place, easily assembled, and occupying a generally horizontal space on a roof-top, or the like, which improves the look of the roof-top and which spreads the weight of the assembly over a relatively wide area.

As amended herein, claim 1 is limited to a fluid filtration assembly comprising a selected number of filtration modules. Each of the modules includes a planar filter unit and first and second housing members connectable together to form an open-sided recess to receive the filter unit edge-wise of the filter unit. Each of the housing members is provided with first and second opening structures, each adapted to serve as either a fluid inlet and/or as a fluid outlet. The housing members are each L-shaped and are connectable to each other by interconnection of pairs with the opening structures to form the recess to receive the filter unit, to form the filtration module. The filtration module is adapted for connection to, and release from, at least one additional filtration module by interconnection of selected ones of the openings, in order to change the capacity of the filtration assembly.

Turning to FR '534, Figs. 2-5, it will be seen that the apparatus shown and described includes a plurality of balconies (4) fixed to a vertical frame (3). Similarly, a plurality of balconies (7) are fixed to a vertical member (10). The combination of balconies (4) and frame (3) constitutes an

assembly A and the combination of balconies (7) and vertical member 10 constitutes an assembly B. The two assemblies are brought together (Fig. 3) to form cavities (12), each of which receives a filtration module (12). Thus, the number of filtration modules is predetermined by the configurations of assemblies A and B.

To alter the capacity of the unit, one can remove a filter (13) and replace it with an "obstructed cassette". Thereafter, the capacity can be increased by removing the obstructed cassette and replacing it with a regular filter (13). In either case, options are very limited and the entire assembly must be opened for filters to be removed and replaced.

Claim 1 is limited to an assembly comprising a selected number of filtration modules open-sided to receive a filter unit edge-wise of the filter unit. Each module is made up of two housing units, each provided with first and second opening structures. The housing units are interconnectable by interconnection of pairs of the opening structures, to form a unit which can slidably receive one of the filter units. One filtration module is adapted for connection to, and removal from another filtration module.

The features noted immediately above do not appear to be present in the FR patent. It therefore appears that claim 1 should be deemed neither anticipated nor rendered obvious by the FR patent.

Claims 4-8, 13-15, 17-20 and 22 depend directly or ultimately from claim 1 and would appear to be allowable at least through dependency.

In addition, claim 19 limits the assembly to being adapted to extend across a generally horizontal mounting surface so as to

distribute weight of the assembly over an area of the surface occupied by bottom edges of the filtration modules, a feature not present in the FR patent.

Claim 22 depends from claim 15 and limits the fluid inlet and outlet structures to being complementarily engageable and comprising an orifice and a tubular sleeve receivable by the orifice.

The assembly of claim 9 includes filtration modules each comprising a first housing surface having a first fluid inlet structure and a first fluid outlet structure in opposed walls of a first collection chamber, and a second housing member of the same structure, each of the housing members being provided with a collection chamber. The collection chambers and the opposed walls define an open-sided recess for slideably receiving the filter unit edge-wise of the filter unit, as is shown in Fig. 4. This arrangement does not appear to be present in the FR patent assembly.

The claim 9 assembly further features the housing members being connectable together by interconnection of selected ones of the fluid inlet and outlet structures.

The claim 9 assembly further features a filtration module being connectable to, and disconnectable from, another filtration module by interconnecting selected ones of the fluid inlet and outlet structures to selectively increase and decrease filtration capacity of the assembly.

The FR patent appears to lack the structure defined by claim 9, as amended, which would appear to render claim 9 neither anticipated nor rendered obvious by the FR patent.

New claim 21 is herein presented for examination. The new claim contains several of the distinctions enumerated hereinabove relative to the FR patent.

In the event that any fees may be required in this matter, please charge the same to Deposit Account No. 16-0221.

Thank you.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Scott R. Foster". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Scott" being more prominent.

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